

## Perspectives in Veterinary Medicine

# Consider a Year-End Donation to Support Animal Health and Welfare

By Dr. Donald F. Smith  
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If you are planning charitable donations this time of year, you may want to consider animal-related opportunities. Here are three recommendations.

*Support pet shelters in your local community:* Local humane shelters are among the most money-strapped animal nonprofits in the country. They operate in local communities, providing critical services for adoption and education, as well as animal rescue, cruelty prevention, and pet overpopulation issues. Most community animal shelters do not receive government funding and rely almost entirely on donations to accomplish their missions. National humane organizations are seldom affiliated with the shelter in your own city or town, so your local shelter/SPCA/humane society may be an excellent place for your support.

*Support the next generation of veterinarians:* Twenty years ago, the ratio of starting salary to educational debt for a graduating veterinarian was 1:1. It now averages 1:2, and is often higher. Each of the nation's 30 veterinary colleges has scholarship funds that would benefit from your donation. Consult the website of your favorite college or the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges.<sup>1</sup> If you wish to contact me directly at [dfs6@cornell.edu](mailto:dfs6@cornell.edu), I can also provide you with the name and address of the appropriate contact at the college of your choice.

*Support veterinary medical research:* There are several reputable organizations that support research on animal health and welfare. Two that I consider among the most effective are the Morris Animal Foundation (supporting the health of pets and wildlife),<sup>2</sup> and the Winn Foundation (for cats).<sup>3</sup> Another of my favorite conservation and wildlife programs is the Cheetah Conservation Fund, a scientifically-based conservation program located in Namibia, Africa.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Association of the American Veterinary Medical Colleges \(AAVMC\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Morris Animal Foundation](#)

<sup>3</sup> [The Winn Foundation](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Cheetah Conservation Fund](#)

KEYWORDS:

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Philanthropy  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
Winn Foundation  
Morris Animal Foundation  
Cheetah Conservation Fund  
Scholarships

TOPIC:

Gifts to support the veterinary profession and research

LEADING QUESTION:

How can you support animal health and welfare?

META-SUMMARY:

Here are some suggestions for supporting animal health and welfare with your contribution.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Donald F. Smith, Dean Emeritus of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, had a passion for the value of the history of veterinary medicine as a gateway for understanding the present and the future of the profession.

Throughout his many professional roles from professor of surgery, to Department Chair of Clinical Sciences, Associate Dean of Education and of Academic Programs and Dean, he spearheaded changes in curriculum, clinical services, diagnostic services and more. He was a diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons and a member of the National Academy of Practices. Most recently he played a major role in increasing the role of women in veterinary leadership.

*Perspectives in Veterinary Medicine* is one of his projects where he was able to share his vast knowledge of the profession.